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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1726
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 4098
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 9837
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 4697
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 9803
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 4444
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 2684
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0942
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001435

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER PINR MASS NP

SUBJECT: PM'S NEW MILITARY ADVISOR REQUESTS HELP FOR
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

REF: KATHMANDU 1376

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty, Reasons, 1.4 (b/d).

Seeks USG Assistance on Building Civilian Capacity for
Oversight of Military

¶1. (C) Newly-appointed Military Advisor to the Prime Minister Ramesh Jung Thapa explained to the Ambassador and Pol/Econ chief that, in his position as the Prime Minister's Military Advisor, he would act as "coordinator" between the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Defense and the Nepalese Army (NA) Chief of Army Staff. He noted that the Government of Nepal (GON) had formed a Special Task Force to codify Parliament's May 18 Declaration putting the army under parliamentary control. He said the GON might seek USG assistance in helping reform the Ministry of Defense in order to build its institutional capacity for military oversight. Acknowledging the GON's lack of experience in civilian military control, he stressed the bureaucracy needed strengthening. He remarked that, "in this strange situation, with apprehension and mysterious fear" among the institutions, the Ministry of Defense needed help. He suggested that the GON might need or invite consultants to set up quietly in the Ministry to work with it.

¶2. (C) Thapa also requested information and material about the United States National Security Council (NSC). He explained that the GON was looking at different models for the NSC in Nepal. The Ambassador said that the USG was committed to help the GON. He agreed that it would be good for Nepal to have an inter-agency coordinating body that reported directly to the head of government. He mentioned that an advance team from the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies would be in town this week and could discuss possibilities for helping the Ministry of Defense. The Ambassador said that he would also discuss the GON's interests when he visited in Washington for consultations the week of June 12.

But Security Equipment Transfers Still On Hold

¶3. (C) The Ambassador assured Thapa that the USG would provide the security training in accordance with GON

requests, i.e., some low-key and in the U.S. The Ambassador reviewed lethal and non-lethal security equipment that the USG was prepared to provide. Thapa said that he had discussed security assistance with Prime Minister Koirala; Thapa explained that the GON was still at a cross-roads, hoping for progress. He added, however, that no one should take risks, and preparedness was very important. He stressed that if negotiations deteriorated, it would be important for the GON to be able to request a resumption of security equipment assistance that could be shipped "promptly."

Shares Concern About Human Rights

¶4. (C) The Ambassador discussed the FY-06 money set aside for security assistance to the GON, explaining that the State Department would need to seek a waiver on human rights grounds. Pol/Econ chief stressed that the GON had to actively investigate allegations of human rights abuses, such as those swirling around activities in 2003 at the Maharajgunj barracks. Thapa said he had had a meeting with the Defense Secretary to discuss the May 26 report by the UN's Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) charging that the NA had been involved with the ill-treatment of 137 detainees and the disappearance of 49 detainees at Maharajgunj (reftel). He said the GON would have to reply and that he would urge the NA to cooperate with OHCHR's investigation.

Comment

¶5. (C) The PM's military advisor seems very favorably disposed to the United States. His son and daughter-in-law work in New York City as medical doctors, while his daughter studied in Arizona, where she lived for a number of years before moving to Vancouver, Canada. His requests for assistance strike us as on target and we recommend the interagency consider ways to respond. PAS will provide him with information and background materials about the NSC.
MORIARTY